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ABSTRACT

A three-part study of social studies curricula in four Wisconsin high schools revealed how teachers use the ways they present course content to maintain discipline and control in the classroom. Called "defensive teaching" by the author, the methods involve simplifying the content and reducing demands made on students. The three parts of the research included an intensive ethnographic analysis of the presentation of economics information in one high school's social studies classes; the extension of this analysis to three other schools; and a survey of student attitudes and employment outside school and of their effects on student school work. Analyzed in terms of the concept of school knowledge and the school's role in society, the study data showed how teachers use the forms of knowledge--namely, teaching techniques involving the fragmentation, mystification, omission, or simplification of economics knowledge--to control the knowledge and thereby control students. These "defensive" techniques were used by teachers from all the political perspectives and teaching philosophies encountered, working in classes with all variations in student ability. The author concludes that it is teachers' accommodation to the school priorities of control and efficiency that leads to the limiting of student access to human knowledge. (Author/RW)

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DEFENSIVE TEACHING AND CLASSROOM CONTROL

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This paper is an expanded version of Chapter 9 of Contradictions of Control, the final report of the Institutional Context of Classroom Knowledge project, funded by Grant No. NIE-G-79-0015 of the Organizational Processes and School Management division of the National Institute of Education. A slightly different version of this paper was presented at the "Social Context as Curriculum" Section of the American Educational Research Association Annual Meetings, April, 1980. In abbreviated form, the paper will be published in Michael W. Apple and Lois Weis, editors, Ideology and Practice in Schooling, Temple University Press, 1982.

DEFENSIVE TEACHING AND CLASSROOM CONTROL

Our image of the one-room schoolteacher, or the master of a Latin-grammar school, is a teacher who wielded the hickory stick in order to make students learn. Student discipline, -- sitting on hard benches, standing to recite, maintaining absolute silence unless spoken to -- was instrumental to mastering the content. A study of four Wisconsin high schools reveals that today many teachers reverse those ends and means. They maintain discipline by the ways they present course content. They choose to simplify content and reduce demands on students in return for classroom order and minimal student compliance on assignments. Feeling less authority than their Latin-grammar school counterpart, they teach "defensively," choosing methods of presentation and evaluation which they hope will make their workload more efficient and create as little student resistance as possible. These findings are interesting because they shed light on the daily processes by which schools mediate cultural knowledge to students. They are important because they demonstrate some of the specific dynamics which lie behind the much-publicized lowered expectations students and teachers are bringing to the classroom. In addition, they are significant because the teachers who teach defensively do not fit any one ideological or demographic category, and they use these techniques of classroom control with students of all ability levels and perceived "differences."

This report of "defensive teaching" is one detail in a series of research projects on the nature of high school social studies curricula. Before elaborating the techniques the teachers used, and their expressed rationale for selecting them, it will be necessary to explain these findings in relation to the larger research projects which brought them to light.

Concentric Circles of Curriculum Analysis

When Dwayne Heubner described curriculum as "the accessibility of knowledge," he was making the point that the curriculum was not merely the content or curriculum guide, but the totality of the learning environment within which that content became accessible to students.[1] Although he meant to call attention to many of the physical attributes of the educative setting, his conception of curriculum as knowledge access has provided an apt phrase for shifting curriculum analysis away from formal definitions of course content and student achievement, toward the origins and nature of the content itself. The question of the role of the school in making knowledge accessible to students became the central research question of a series of three studies of high school social studies curricula conducted between 1975 and 1981. Beginning at the classroom, and expanding into the institutional and societal contexts of the classroom, these studies focused on the role of the school in conveying information to students: <u>What kinds of knowledge do schools make accessible? How is school knowledge a product of the ways of knowing students encounter in school</u>?

The first study in this series was an intensive ethnographic analysis of the nature of the economics information to which high school students are exposed in their required social studies classes.[2] The research began at the classroom level, where students encounter school knowledge. The intent of the study was to contrast the treatment of such historical topics as social, political and military history, with economics information, a subject teachers are usually presumed to be less comfortable with or less trained in. Daily observations in three teachers' classes for a semester were supplemented with interviews of the students and teachers and investigation into the history of the school and its policies. The purpose of the daily observations, rather than mere analysis of course outlines and texts, was to try to ascertain not only what information about the American economy was made accessible to students, but in what ways students encountered the information.

The findings on these two questions can be summarized as follows: While the teachers in most cases gave a great deal of time to economics topics within their history classes, and one was trained in economics and interested in it, unit titles were not necessarily indicative of course content. Contrary to the expectation (or, hypothesis) that economics information would be treated more superficially than other historical topics, all topics in this southern Wisconsin high school's observed classes were reduced to simplistic, teacher-controlled information which required no reading or writing by the students, little or no student discussion and very little use of the school's extensive resources. This pattern distorted, or truncated, even those economics topics which were included. The teachers at this school, whose lectures provide many of the examples of defensive teaching to be discussed below, offered conscious reasons for wishing to control

student access to information. Interviews with the teachers revealed that they had a much broader knowledge of the economy, both academically and experientially, than they admitted in class. Their stated goal of making sure students understood "how things work" was tempered by their expressed fear that students might find out about the injustices and inadequacies of their economic and political institutions. For these teachers, knowledge access, a goal consistent with the good reputation of their middle-class school and of their status in it, was proscribed by their deliberate selections of lecture topics which would distance the students from the content. Their patterns of knowledge control were, according to their own statements in taped interviews, rooted in their desire for classroom control. Their memories of the Vietnam war era made them wish to avoid topics on which the students were likely to disagree with their views or which would make the students "cynical" about American institutions. Administrative policies which had redrawn the school's boundary to include more working-class families and which had done away with ability-group (I.Q.) tracking had caused the teachers to feel that their school was not "as good' as it used to be." The intangible rewards of teaching the "best" students in the "best" high school had been taken away, over their protests, and no incentives to deal with the new groups of students or newly heterogenous classes had taken their place. Their expectations of their students and of their own ability to affect student learning skills had , in their mind, been progressively lowered over the recent past. They saw student ability levels as endpoints which limited what they could do in their classes, not as beginning points for teacher help and instruction.

In addition, they felt burdened by an administration which expected them to enforce rules of discipline, but which rarely

backed them on that enforcement. As a result, they wanted to avoid as many inefficient exchanges as possible in order to get through the day. I have described their control of classroom knowledge as their negotiation of efficiencies: they calculated how much of their personal knowledge of the economy and other aspects of the society under study to put at risk in the classroom, given their small financial rewards and professional incentives when contrasted with the potential for classroom disorder, dissent and conflict. Economics information available, then, to their students reflected not their amount of training or interest in the subject, nor their particular political position on a topic, but their skills of maintaining classroom control. (Ironically, their very attempt to minimize student cynicism by simplifiying content and avoiding class discussion only heightened student disbelief of school knowledge and fostered in students greater disengagement from the learning process. As discussed at length in another paper, interviews with the students revealed how suspect they found school knowledge, especially if any teacher-supplied information was contradicted by an independent source.[3] Just as the teachers' more complex personal knowledge of the topics was masked by their desire for classroom order and efficiency, the students appeared to acquiesce to the pattern of classroom knowledge, only to silently resist believing it.)

Because the teachers attributed so much of their need for classroom efficiency to an administrative context which placed constraints without accompanying supports (as in the addition of lower-income neighborhoods to the school's boundary, or in de-tracking), a second study broadened the circle of analysis from the classroom to the institution itself.[4] Three high schools, also in Wisconsin and having similar student populations, were chosen for their variation from the

first high school in the ways their administration related to teacher oversight and classroom processes. The purpose was to see how much of the knowledge control in the first school would be common to schools having different administrative contexts within which teacher made decisions of knowledge access and resource usage. Briefly stated, the chief finding was that the administrative context can greatly affect what teachers do, what they demand of themsevles and each other in the way of collecting, designing and using resources. Administrative arrangements which encourage and actively support collective work, which structurally support unified curricula across normal subject boundaries, and most important, which do not subordinate the educative goals of the school to goals of order and control, can make teachers more willing to open up their personal information in the classroom as it relates to course content. What these administrative arrangements fail to completely resolve is what is required of students. Thus, though their students express less suspicion of teacher-supplied information, they nevertheless still feel more pressure from the social control goals of the school (especially in earning required credits, regardless of content or quality of work) than from a need to learn about a subject or a method of inquiry.

In the first school, I described the classroom dynamics as a negotiation bewteen students and teachers, each trying to maintain their own efficiencies, and in the process reducing the teaching-learning interaction to a ritual whose substnace neither took very seriously. In the administrative study, it became clear that the actual structure which linked teachers and administrators was less determinative of classroom procedures than the way that structure was used to resolve (or exacerbate) the tension between the educative and the social control

goals of the school. Whenever administrative personnel devote most of the staff's time, meetings, and resources to discussions of hall order, discipline and numbers of course credits earned, teachers respond with overt but usually reluctant compliance on those goals but reduced effort toward only minimal standards in their actual teaching. Students do not always understand where teacher motivations originate, nor even that the teachers know that the course is watered down or undemanding, but they do sense when the teachers take the work seriously.[5] When students see minimal teaching, they respond with minimal classroom effort (which is not the same as minimal learning; many students, like the teachers, are far more articulate and informed on a given topic than the classroom processes make admissible to the classroom). Much of the student apathy, and even occasional resistance, which administrators see as a motivation problem requiring more discipline procedures, arises in these schools precisely from the fact that goals of order have already undermined the ability of staff to deal with educative goals.

The third study in this set of concentric circles does not provide any of the examples of defensive teaching which will be explored. But it does illuminate the context within which teachers are making curricular decisions. The two previous ethnographic studies revealed through teacher and student interviews some of the effects student part-time employment has on high school classrooms. Teachers reduce the number or complexity of assignments, or choose to lecture rather than hold a discussion based on an assignment, because so many students work long hours, many more than 30 hours per week. The students work for many reasons, but more for buying major purchases than saving for college or helping support their families. The third phase of the research is a survey of students' employment and perceptions of its

effects on their school work.[6] In interviews, many have expressed frustration that so little "happens" at school; having so little significant studying or homework, they decide to add five hour hours to their work week. The teachers express anger at the students' priorities and often resent the students' spending power. In silent retaliation or in frustration after trying to get sleepy students to discuss, they water down the content even further. The cycle of resentment and low expectations that this pattern of student employment fuels is talked about by school personnel at all four high schools. But school personnel so far only talk about it, talk about how it includes "even the bright kids now," talk about how inflation only makes it more likely to continue. But none have taken into account what it means to their program, whether there are ways to creatively respond and take new economic realities into the learning process. So, even though that next phase of the research on the origins and effects of social studies content is not completed and does not offer us new examples of defensive teaching strategies, it is mentioned here because it helps explain the context within which teachers are making curricular decisions.

Conceptions of School Knowledge

In making school knowledge a problematic, one goes against the long-standing tradition of social studies curriculum research. Careful reading of the comprehensive survey of social studies education research sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the Social Science Education Consortium reveals the acceptance by most education researchers of the course titles and educationist instructional jargon at face value.[7] Every study cited in the sections on the "effectiveness"

of social studies instructional methods and materials left unexamined the assumption that schools exist to convey information, to increase learnings, to increase achievements. Discussion of content and instructional method were treated separately in the survey of recent research, appropriate to their traditional theoretical separation in the ends-means conceptualization which underlies most education research. This attention to goal attainment ("effectiveness") omits two considerations. The first is the interrelation of instructional process with instructional content apart from the effectivesnss standard; that is, how the methods and forms of conveying knowledge affect the knowledge itself, and in turn affect student perceptions. The second is the possibility that producing "effects" in terms of student learnings or achievements might not be a primary goals of the classroom interaction. There was no analytical category for what might be suffering omission in the information exchange. Our attention has been so focused on what teachers (curriculum planners) want students to learn, that we have no empirical precedent for looking at what teachers do not want them to learn or at reasons for teachers' limit:

While a research procedures for analyzing the <u>inaccessibility</u> of knowledge seems on the surface absurd, it should not, given a history of content analysis by special interest groups which have pointed out cultural biases in content selection and testing practices. Frances Fitzgerald and Jean Anyon have documented the selective omission of economic history unflattering to the myth of corporate and technological "progress" and free enterprise.[8] Blacks, women's groups, hispano-Americans and others have forced at least symbolic revision of textbook

content and illustrations to include representation of their contributions to American history.[9]

The remedy of the 1960's and early 1970's was to revise texts in order to try to "put in" whatever was being "left out." While this ameliorative approach was probably better than nothing, it left curriculum analysis largely at the "planning" level, the level of curriculum development, to the exclusion of such considerations as the institutional forces at work in those cultural selections and the impact of curricula on students. The distinctness of these three aspects of curricula as subjects of different professionals' research should not mask their interrelation in the real world of schools. Where school knowledge comes from is part and parcel of what it looks like, what values it embodies, what forms it takes, and what impact it has on students.

Before demonstrating this interrelationshp through selected examples of in-use curricula, it will be helpful to ground those examples in the context of the broader question of the role the school serves in society. Although most curriculum developers would stand by their assumption that schools serve to increase achievements, we have the benefit of many insights to the contrary. Bowles and Gintis and other have argued that the foremost role of the school is economic rather than educative, in the strictest sense.[10] The primary purpose of free public education in an industrial society is to sort students for positions of labor and management, and to stratify their access to knoweldge to make them into docile and productive workers in an economy where they can expect to see the products of their labor appropriated into the profit structure of others. The structure of schooling, into a credentialing system which supercedes instruction,

conforms to the individualized, alienating workplace with its external rewards. This view of the school as a tool of social of the masses by elites has different configurations in different societies. Bourdieu[11] has described the higher education system of France as a sophisticated system of stratified knowledge, wherein the high culture of aristocratic elites is promulgated as more worthy and more universal than the vernacular cultures of non-elites. "Real knowledge,"and"true culture" are those historically characteristic of the aristocracy. Institutions of learning not only define what is socially desirable knowledge but do so in ways that engender a "habitus," or dispostion toward dominant values, which goes beyond holding specific pieces of information. The school serves to shape the consciousness of a nation by making individuals disposed to defining their world through the definitions of those in power.[12]

Before World War II, British education gave highest status to the cultural forms of the classical education of the gentleman class, and kept the technical knowledge of the working people at lowest status. This legacy persists in subtle forms; one's perceived job future, inferred from one's social class backgrounds, helps determine which kinds of knowledge one would have access to.[13] By contrast, in the U.S., where economic power has been more associated with corporate growth than with centuries of inherited wealth, technological language, especially in the sciences, has displaced the traditional Latin-school culture as high status knowledge. Post-sputnik investments in education were aimed originally at those students who through standardized testing showed aptitude for physics, higher mathematics, and proficiency in practical (non-literary) foreign language, skills valued by the military and industrial complex. While valuing

scientific inquiry among intellectual elites (to the point of applying scientific, or scientistic, modes of inquiry to almost every field of study), schools ironically presented a very sanitized view of science to ordinary students in survey courses. There, science has not been taught as an arena of competing discoveries, but as incrementally progressing experiemnts whose results add up to "science."

This emerging critique of the social roles of school curricula force us out of the pattern of accepting the curricula as given, out of a research paradigm which manipulates all manner of instructional variables in search of the key to "effectiveness." However, this view of schools seems also to take too seriously the planning, or rational, component of school curricula. In talking about the role of school knowlege in cultural reproduction, writers frequently use terms which seem to imply deliberateness on the part of someone who is pulling the strings of knowledge access, knowledge stratification, and knowledge control: "the state encodes. . .," or "the school stratifies." I have argued elsewhere that both dominant models of curriculum theory (management and cultural reproduction) see the student as too passive, too acted upon, without an interactive model for seeing whether in fact the student is resisting the processing of the school.[14] Similarly, the cultural reproduction model of curriculum analysis seems to accept too readily the implication of planning, that someone out there is stratifying school knowledge, that the interests vested in school knowledge necessarily reflect manipulation by elites in a way that can be explained as the direct exercise of power. In fact, schools' mediation of dominant culture can be far more subtle.

What the cultural reproduction model gives us is a view of the curriculum as problematic, as reflective of human interests. From this

perspective, we are no longer bound by the pretense that school knowledge is the product of neutral, experimental inquiry, resulting in objective selections of information most conducive to "effective learning" We can begin to see that school knowledge, in some vague way, seems to correspond to the interests of powerful groups in the society. But it is dangerous to carry this model of correspondence too far in the American setting. Even though the French have had their Academies and elite schools established by the aristocracy and the church, and the British have had their tradition of aristocratic and later nationally centralized schooling, schooling in the U.S. is much more decentralized, much more chaotic. The mechanisms by which certain forms of knowledge are transmitted in schools, and others are omitted, necessarily have local as well as national characteristics.

Broadly speaking, there are such national pressures as university entrance requirements and such national tests as those offered by Education Testing Service which dominante some course offerings in American high schools. And demands by business people that public schools prepare their future lower level employees have resulted in such direct interventions into curriculum as Career Education and a proliferation of office and trade courses. But the content of these courses, even where stipulated by state legislatures, does not reflect explicit centralized policy.

Because it has been fairly low status since the post-Sputnik promotion of science and math, the social studies courses (sometimes called social science courses in deference to technological trends) in most schools reflect little concern for national standardized tests

or centralized curriculum planning. Authority for course titles usually rests with state departments of public instruction or local school boards, but the content of courses remains significantly at the discretion of the local school's individual teachers or social studies department. Social studies, then is an interesting area in which to bring generalizations about the nature of school knowledge down to the level where selected knowledge about the society's institutions is encountered by the student. It is at the classroom level that we can best see the tension between making information accessible and making information inaccessible. By examining close-up the ways the teachers offer and withhold information, we can test our generalization about rationalities of curriculum planning and the school's role in cultural reproduction against the actual mediaton of cultural selections.

Knowledge Forms as Knowledge Control

The examples of classroom knowledge cited below are drawn from the early ethnographic study of economics information in the U.S. history classes of a southern Wisconsin high school and from similar observations in the three Wisconsin high schools selected for the later study of the administrative context within which teachers make curriculum decisions. The teachers are all middle-aged white men, except for one woman; all have at least a Master's Degree and many have additional university training beyond that. All have taught for at least ten years. Although the academic reputation of the schools varies somewhat, the student populations are remarkably similar: predominantly white middle-class children of professionals, state-employees, small business owners or well-paid laborers. Both the students and the teachers can be characterized by a wide range of political and philosophical values. Across these diversities,

the techniques the teachers chose for controlling classroom behavior through approaches to course content are unexpectedly similar. After examining those techniques, we can better understand their relation to these teacher and student diversities and to the role schools play in the dissemination of cultural knowledge and knowledge forms.

The techniques the teachers at the four schools used to convey course content to their students had to fulfill two goals, or so the teachers expressed: they had to give the students information about American history and economics, and at the same time, they had to establish firm limits as to the complexity and recentness of the topic and the efficiency of presentation. Most of the teachers resolved this tension by maintaining tight control over course content, eliminating almost all student reading assignments or written work. Information related to the course came to students through teacher lecture and teacher-selected films. As discussed in "Negotiating Classroom Knowledge,"[15] students rarely spoke (as infrequently as twelve student comments all semester in one class of thirty juniors), and when they did, it was to ask the teacher a question rather than discuss the topic with each other. Therefore, one may limit analysis to teacher comments and lectures and still gain a fairly full picture of the knowledge, and most importantly, the ways of knowing, the students encountered.

Educators usually see "lecture" as a negative term,[16] to be contrasted with inquiry, discussion or other more enlightened forms of instruction. Lecture can actually bring to mind a wide range of verbal activities, from the dull-half-reading of a prepared text to brilliant discourse, within which the lecturer can argue, dramatize,

compare, or question. Lecture itself need not be a limitation on knowledge forms and content. With these particular teachers, however, lecture provided the best means toward their contradictory goals of giving the student information about the required subject in a way that maintained the teachers' professional role, while withholding from them ideas and information which might disrupt the class efficiency. Within each lecture technique, we will see that control of knowledge really has at its core the control of the students.

Fragmentation

The simplest, and probably most notorious lecture technique among social studies teachers, is the reduction of any topic to fragments, or disjointed pieces of information. Lists. A list keeps a teacher from having to elaborate or show linkages, and it keeps a student, especially students weak at reading and writing, from having to express "learnings" in complete sentences or paragraphs. No one is called upon to synthesize, or give a picture of interrelationships.

At all of these schools, fragmentation was most commonly used when the teacher considered the information vital to the students' knowledge. The list as a lecture device has the benefit of reducing all information to "facts," as though each term in the list represents a consensus among historians or the general public about an event, a personnaage or an issue. In fact, lists usually take the issue-ness out of issues by collapsing contradictory opinions into a single enumeration of fragments of the story.

Several examples will illustrate the transformation of a segment of history undergoes when confined to a list. The characteristics of political parties, economic policies or major institutions; the causes or results or effects or vairous events or activites; and the

people and dates central to historical events are all most likely to be presented as lists or as points in a formal outline. Almost every teacher observed in the four schools described labor history in terms of the names of various unions and their founders or primary leaders. They printed on the blackboard lists of the "tools" or "weapons" labor and management had at their disposal during grievances (strike, lock-out, injunction, and so on). The only exception was a seasoned labor leader (organizer of teacher unions) who showed a film of the Triangle fire and told old stories about labor conditions. Otherwise, as Anyon has noted, the conditions giving rise to the labor movement are almost never discussed, or even put into a list. On this topic, like many others, the list is not a mental crutch for remembering the details from a complicated study topic, it is the study of the topic. Suddenly, with little background, the course chronology arrives at industrialization; the teacher reads a list of new labor unions. The same strategy was used to convey information about the benefits of TVA ("soil conservation, an energy yardstick, advanced farming techniques") without background into energy needs or policies of the period. The names of New Deal agencies, again with little background as to the economic conditions and political compromises involved, is a favorite subject for lists.

The teachers at the first high school observed were very articulate in explaining their view of their job and their rationale for their instructional techniques. They expressed the sentiment that their job as history teachers was to tell students the "true story" of American history. By presenting that story in fragments, they made efficient use of time, avoided arousing discussion, and presented

information in a manner conducive to measurable outcomes on tests. When filled with lists, the course content appears to be rigorous and factual. It makes the teacher appear knowledgeable and gives students a sense of fairness in the grading: they know they have to memorize the lists. Lists and unelaborated terms reduce the uncertainty for both students and teachers. For this reason, it is clearly the dominant mode of conveying information.

The effects of lists on students were two-fold: of all the strategies for controlling classroom knowledge, this one seemed to have the most pay-off for students. Depending on their abilities and diligence, they could turn the fragments of information in their notebooks into test points. Grades of B or C were easily earned because so little was expected in these classes; that softened the fact that the course was required for graduation.

But this fragmentation of information, without the opportunity for indepth consideration of a topic, also carried within it a vulnerability of which the teachers seemed unaware. Interviews with the students revealed that their overt acquiescence to the lectures masked covert suspicions or rejection of much of the course content.[17] One of the reasons was that many of these students had had experiences (or had heard those of their parents) which contradicted teacher-supplied information. Many students mentioned that when the teacher presented as fact <u>one item</u> which the student believed to be untrue or misleading, the entire course becamse suspect for that student. Their information came from stories their grandparents told, from their parents' professions or travels, from their own jobs, from television

documentaries or occasionally from books or newspapers. These students, whom the teachers dismissed as needing to have everything "spoon fed" to them, were silently comparing the classroom version of the "facts" with whatever other source was available to them. Any discrepancy discredited the teacher in their eyes. The brisk pace of the lectures and the consistency of the course format in preventing discussion also prevented elaboration of items in lists and prevented comparison with varied interpretations. No doubt such comparisons, if they had taken place, would not always have validated the students' personal information. In their absence, the students' personal sources of information were more often credible to them. Thus the teachers successfully used fragments and lists to efficiently convey a vast number of facts and to proscribe discussion and disagreement by this appearance of factuality. The irony is that this technique created so much distance between the student and the content that it caused a backlash of the kind of cynicism the teachers were trying to avoid.

Mystification

I have termed another treatment of information mystification. Teachers often tried to surround a controversial or complex topic with mystery in order to close off discussion of it. When the teachers mystified a topic, they made it appear very important but unknowable. When they mentioned the Federal Reserve or the gold standard or the International Monetary Fund, they asked students to copy the term into their notes. Then a comment would follow to the effect that students should know about this and remember the term for their next test, but that non-experts really could not go into depth on this subject. Sometimes this seemed to be a ruse to hide the teacher's

lack of knowledge of the subject, as when one teacher said the students should write down that Nixon took us off the gold standard, but that he did not know what that meant and wasn't going to go into it with an "economics major" [sic] present. This point had been on the transparency outline from which he lectured every day for years, so one doubts whether he had even "gone into it" beyond this brief mention.

Capitalism, the importance of political parties, free enterprise, and progress are all aspects of our system which were mentioned with an aura of respect or reverence, then left as slogans. The intent seemed to be to have students internalize the affective component of the term so that their trust of the system would be enhanced. This attention to affiliative language best conforms to Bourdieu's concept of creating "habitus" rather than mechanistic reproduction of the dominant culture. Certain this was the intent of the teachers. The woman teacher told me that she wished more than anything that students would appreciate their institutions, because the people who came before them had worked hard to create them, especially during the New Deal reforms. A man teacher at her school added, "You have to sell the system." Both attributed student cynicism toward business institutions and school rules to partial information students during the Vietnam war era had come across. This partial information combined with student enthusiasm to make students disruptive in class, arrogant about their own opinions, and generally hard to control. These two teachers reflected on their manner of presenting information and deliberately wove a story which reinforced simple themes and minimized differences.

The effect of mystification was that students did for the most

part internalize some of the emotional quality of the term, while remaining unable to explain it. When asked to explain free enterprise, students would answer with affiliative languaged based on little factual knowledge: "it means you can own your own business without government controls," or "we have labor unions here but I don't know what they do." They seemed to know that the mystified term was meant to be comparative, showing the superiority of the U.S. economic system, but they could not elaborate that system or the meaning of the term. For students suspicious of course content, and for some who were not suspicious but frustrated that the course did not have more "meat" to it, this mystification created unease because they felt they should have a chance to have capitalism, or free enterprise, or fiscal and monetary policy, really explained to them until they understood it. Their common response sounded something like, "I hear that term every year, but I still don't know what it means."

Mystification also helped engender a client mentality: since students were not invited to pursue information on their own, to dig deeper into subjects that were mentioned then closed off, they developed a feeling of dependence on externally-supplied information. Frequently when asked what they thought they should learn about a certain topic, the answer shifted to the third person. "'They' never tell us"; "they should tell us"; or "pollution must not be a problem because <u>they</u> don't mention it anymore " (emphasis added). Since many of these same students felt they could not trust teacher-supplied information, their "they" remained without antecedent.

Omission

The lecture strategy which produced the most backlash of suspicion, and the only resistance to be voiced in class, was omission. The students were less concerned about specific topics omitted than about whole time periods omitted from the lecutre. Several students did express concern that variant points of view were omitted from class, and most said they wished students could discuss. But their chief and almost unanimous concern was that their United States history courses dealing, according to course title, with the most recent periods of history, ended with Eisenhower or Kennedy. Especially at the first school observed, where the course was titled "Contemporary United States History," each teacher crammed the most recent twenty years, of the fifty or so to be covered by the course, into the last three to eight days of the semester.

There were several reasons for this. Most obvious was that to the teachers, events that had happened in their adulthood were "current events" to them even though to the students "current events" usually meant this year's happenings. The Vietnam war (which ended several years prior to the observation) got from zero to four and a half minutes' treatment in these three classes. Current presidential campaigns and economic turmoil (inflation, unemployment, energy, near-bankrupt cities) which were of great interest to the students were "lightweight" topics on which "historians do not yet agree," in the teachers' conception of the "story" of history. The teacher who lectured daily from transparencies did not want to bring in current events as they related to historical topics, because he preferred to use the same transparency outline year after year. He said

that he spent the greater part of the course on the New Deal and the Depression because no one could hope to understand current situations without a thorough grounding in these periods which so shaped our current institutions. Aside from this pedagogical reason, the teachers also stated emphatically that they intended never to return to the days of Vietnam and student rights protests when students shouted teachers down and when class discussion thereby became "unbalanced."

One teacher said that he had cut out research papers because the weaker students could not think of a topic on their own and the brighter students had during the anti-war movement "written terrific papers -- but they were self-indoctrinated." They learned something which contradicted the teacher's analysis of the events. This teacher told the class being observed that he was not going to discuss the Vietnam war (although his chronological coverage of American history had come to that point) because he had "heard Vietnam for the past ten years." He similarly dismissed poverty by saying that no one starves to death in this country; a black student tried to challenge this statement but had only intuition to go on and so was not believed. This teacher was a very friendly and caring person who usually tried to get students to realize how well off Americans are compared to most other people. But one day he refused a student's definition of "exploitation" as "rip-off." He said that the investment ofAmerican capital in other countries always had a beneficial effect on both the U.S. and the recipient economy. Again, a few students tried to object on the basis of news reports they had heard, but were unsuccessful, except that they did press the teacher to admit that United Fruit had given multinational corporations a "bad name."

The concept of "exploitation" had come up in a one-day survey of U.S. policies toward Latin America. The framework of the course, built around lists of treaties, technical terms like exploitation, and similarly abbreviated facts, did not permit student or teacher exploration of the emerging differences of interpretation. The students shrugged, wrote down the requisite terms, and resumed silence.

Omission also extended beyond current topics to include the controversial sides of topics which were mentioned. For example, no mention was made of protests against U.S. entry into World War II, of people who disliked Roosevelt's New Deal policies, or of people who disagreed with Truman's decision of bombing Hiroshima. Variation across region, ethnic group, social class, or gender was also notably absent. "We Americans . . ." was usually the subject of any sentence describing an era or momentous event. Most of the students interviewed volunteered a concern that they felt was omitted from the course, whether it was a specific topic ("why so much money is spent on the space program") or a perspective ("what if your grandparents liked Huey Long?"). The girls were not too concerned that women of history were omitted, but the one black student and many whites wondered aloud why few issues related to blacks were included. Several noted the lack of mention of other countries, or the comparison of American institutions or events with related ones in other countries. In short, the teachers actually stimulated interest in the contemporary period by omitting it, though they did have the effect of not having to deal with it.

Any course involves selections. Omissions described by Anyon and

Fitzgerald are those systematically characteristic of commercial textbook publishers. There were instances at each of these schools of a teacher's choosing not to deal with a topic that was included in the text or in the school's resources or even in the course outline. While obvious constraints fo time and student ability would account for some omissions any teacher makes, these teachers were very verbal in explaining the basis of some of their omissions. They wished to omit material or perspectives on material which would foster contradictory opinions and make studnets want to discuss. The teachers felt they could cover more material more efficiently if controversial topics were omitted. The pace of the lecture was critical to covering the course adequately. To maintain that pace, student talk had to be kept to a minimum.

Defensive Simplification

The fourth strategy which will be mentioned here cuts across ideological lines and institutional contexts more than any of the others. That is the tactic by which teachers get around what they perceive to be a lack of strong student interest of the weakness of student abilities. Rather than rely on that old standard, "motivation," the teachers will get the students' compliance on a lesson by promising that it will not be difficult and will not go into any depth.

While fragmentation, mystification and omission strategies may all be seen as efforts to simplify content, this last is distinguished by the term defensive. Unlike the old wielder of the hickory stick, the teacher announces the topic of study, which may sound very complicated, then apologizes for it and promises it will not demand much work. Examples might be supply and demand or the industrialization-urbanization syndrome. Any real treatment of the topic would require time, comparison

of varied interpretations, investigations of varied information resources and the effort of making repeated explanations or of offering distinct encounters with the topic (through small group iscussion, film, research, reading or whatever) until everyone in the class understood it at some reasonable level. Although the topic is formally listed in the course outline, and the teacher will present something about it for later use on a test, he or she may not intend for the students to go beyond this superficial treatment. Yet just announcing the topic makes students think they will have to do some work. The teacher gets them to cooperate without resisting by promising that indeed the study of this topic will require no commitment of effort, and little time, on their part. This strategy of making knowledge inaccessible makes twenty-plus years of research on "effectiveness" look incredibly naive. Equally naive was the research hypothesis which guided the classroom observations in search of the kinds of economics information made available in these classes. The specific topics became almost irrelevant when they were subjected to a defensive presentation.

Topics introduced "defensively" were less likely to be politically sensitive and controversial than those which were mystified. Rather, they tended to be topics which needed a great deal of unpackaging to be grasped, topics not amenable to reduction to items in a list. Whereas the labor movement could be reduced to names, dates, famous strikes and weapons of labor-management dispute, fiscal and monetary policy could hardly be treated at all without explanation of the interrelationship of private and public sector economic decision-making, the concept of money supply and circulation, and other aspects such

as public works programs, the tension between unemployment and inflation, and the nature of credit economies. Political trade-offs are a vital component, also. Sometimes such complicated topics were omitted altogether although in the interview the teacher said they were essential to a student's education. At other times, the teacher contrived a set of lists of factual terms which lay out key components of the topic. Yet other times, either because the topic was mentioned in a text or curriculum guide, or because a later unit built upon it, the topic became unavoidable. When this became evident, the teacher very quickly followed the announcement of the topic with the caveat that "it won't be as bad as it sounds."

The simplification may take the form of a very brief sketch of the topic in the lecture, a worksheet with blanks to be filled in with fragments of fact, a filmstrip which reduces the topic to its simplest possible form, or a handout such as a one-page magazine article which talks around the topic without ever really explaining it. Most important is the ritual of seeming to deal with the topic. The teacher makes a few remarks, the students groan, the activity (lecture, filmstrip, or whatever) proceeds and is briefly concluded, the teacher asks if there are any questions, and there are none.

The observations and interviews turned up several possible explanations behind this trategy of controlling students by simplifying the lessons. The first that teachers express is fatigue. Having reached middle-age or seen their paychecks long ago out-stripped by inflation, the teachers say that they no longer feel the energy and drive to do whatever is necessary to make students understand. They feel neither the support nor financial reward commensurate with the out-of-class time needed to adequately prepare learning activities nor

to read and comment on student essay tests or written assignments appropriate to real delving into such topics. The energy they recall being willing to expend during their earlier days of teaching has dwindled now to minimal effort.

A second factor is the minimal effort students seem willing to put forth. In two of the four schools over half the juniors and seniors interviewed worked more than twenty hours per week in addition to going to school full-time.[15] Other teachers noted that the enthusiasm for social studies courses in the 1960's had given way to higher priorities for math and science in the 1970's and 1980's. Whatever school effort students were willing to spend, they saved for these courses, which they saw as more instrumental to job futures. There is no objective way to know if students today are less willing to work at learning than students of ten or twenty years ago, but teachers who have been around that long swear it is true. One mentioned that he can no longer depend on centering a class period around a completed homework assignment; many assignments eventually trickle in, but not on time. Another mentioned that there seem to be fewer "slow" students who learn by consistently pushing themselves to "overachieve," in other words to stretch beyond what is normally expected of them. Tired, bored and rushed to cover content, teachers and students meet in a path of least resistance. Expected student resistance to taxing assignments is circumvented by making the assignments less taxing. Thus again the teachers maintain classroom control and control of information at the same time.

A third explanation teachers give for simplifying content in order to gain student cooperation is the lack of a supportive administration. In the second phase of research, the administrative

context was analyzed for its effect on the ways teachers make knowledge and ways of knowing accessible to students.[16] The basic finding was that there is a parallel between administrators' attempts to gain minimal compliance from teachers and teachers' settling for minimal compliance from students. In those schools where administrators devoted most of the schools' staff time and resources to maintaining order and to attending to such details as course credits, the administrators paid less attention to the academic quality of teaching. The content of the curriculum was clearly secondary to the maintenance of order. Teachers in these schools tended to expend minimal effort in the classroom; frequently this was deliberate and was explained by the teacher as retaliation for or reluctant accomodation to administrative pressure for precision in paperwork, extra hall monitoring, or extended meetings related to such matters as graduation requirements.

In the school where the administration most supported the teaching function, gave most attention to the quality of instruction, teachers responded by demanding more of themselves in the presentation and preparation of lessons. They felt and demonstrated less of a wall between their personal knowledge and the "official" knowledge of the classroom. They used fewer lists, and provided more extended descriptions, more opportunities for student discussion, more varieties of learning experiences (including the willingness to bring speakers in from the community). Not even in this school, however, were teachers free of the kind of "defensive simplification" which has been described as prevalent at the other schools.

One teacher whose classes were extremely rich in ideas and in

materials he had collected or developed, explained that he did not have high expectations that the students would really deal with those ideas. Although he did require more reading than teachers at the first school observed, he had students fill in the blanks on daily worksheets. He stated that he did not like the worksheets, but that he began using them after a year or two of teaching when he discovered that students were not reading. He acknowledged that the worksheets did show that students had read, but did not necessarily mean they could discuss or integrate the ideas. The worksheet assignment allowed the teacher to deal with history in a way that kept his own interest because ideas were involved, but also in a way that let students know they were not "responsible" for more than the most basic components of the lesson. This same teacher was known for asking tough, analytical questions. He built his history courses around such themes as the relation of violence to human history and the obligation of the individual to the state. Yet he said that he had eliminated student research papers because "these students are too young to even ask a question, much less look for answers." Except for a very few students, who in interviews talked about having wrestled with his "questions that catch you off guard," most of these questions became rhetorical, with the teacher and students knowing that the real grade was based on the worksheets and short-answer tests.

The full impact of the administrative context is beyond the scope of this discussion. It is mentioned here because it is large in the minds of many teachers who reflect on their teaching strategies and who acknowledge their willingness to settle for thin curricular

substance if students will cooperate and help class go smoothly. The institutional rewards for order do not entirely shape classroom knowledge; but they set up a dynamic which often places added burdens of time and energy and added personal risk on those teachers who would hope to teach beyond minimal standards.

Variations and Differences

Educators are accustomed to think in terms of student differences. Curriculum analysts speak of ideological differences among teachers. The examples of defensive teaching witnessed in these schools cut across differences in teachers' personal political and pedagogical philosophies and across formal definitions of student ability variations. If we understand its pervasiveness inspite of expected variations and exceptions, we may better grasp what is at work when schools mediate social knowledge.

Most published educational research begins with the premise that student ability differences and achievement differences matter and in fact lie at the heart of educational exchanges. This became clear to me as I presented these examples of knowledge simplification to various groups of researchers. Even those critical theorists most skeptical of formal educationist categories would ask, "What about the bright students? How was it different for weak students?" Our experiences with knowledge stratified by student achievement or social class levels make the questions reasonable. But none of the observed teachers followed the truism by teaching to the brighter or upper class students, by watering down content only for the non-college-bound or lower income student. The way these teachers deal with student differences is much more complex and demonstrates the potential for rationalizing contradictory goals inherent in one's institutional roles.

The teachers at all four schools talked to me about student ability differences. Many mentioned that it was difficult to try to teach classes in which many students were "very bright" and other students "could not read." Only one teacher ever mentioned which students he felt fit into each category, even though several were pressed in interviews to elaborate their distinctions. The teachers at the first school observed felt constrained, even punished, to have to teach heterogenous classes. They felt their ability to affect students' learning had diminished with the elimination of I.Q.-based tracking. Teachers at the other schools preferred the mixed-ability classes. In both cases, teachers frequently made comments which demonstrated their knowledge of and consideration of traditional ability classifications for students.

Yet in their classes, the teaching strategies belied these differences. One teacher who had fairly weak students made his lectures simple and required no effort from students beyond answering a few questions each week on dittoed sheets. A teacher of an honors history class assigned the roles to play in a trial of Harry Truman for the Hiroshima bombings. He gave them no instructions on role-playing, did not check the progress of their background reading before the enactment, and interrupted the poor performances after only a few minutes and gradually resumed lecturing. Later, he told me, "I knew they couldn't do it; I knew it would turn out like this." By not continuing the assignment with the instructions to prepare properly, the teacher in effect apologized for having expected something of the students. It was easier for him to diffuse the expectations than follow through with them.

His treatment of the honors students was very little different

from the strategy of the teacher of a mixed-ability class who assigned students to read one book per semester, then accepted nominal book reports, some of which were admittedly copied from book jackets.

The most telling concern for student differences came from the teachers who had fought de-tracking. They were convinced that student ability differences greatly affected student learning and called for vastly different teaching techniques. They fondly recalled being able to have panel discussions and research papers with the "bright" students, but had "spoon fed" the "masses" and had let the lowest level of students read the morning paper with the football coach for their "U.S. History" course. These same teachers applied their "spoon feeding" techniques to all levels once the levels were mixed. Although the rationale of the school system had been to further democratize classrooms by eliminating tracking, making each individual the focus of instruction, apart from group labels, the effect of de-tracking was that teachers treated all the individuals as they had formerly treated their "masses." They began to define all students by their middle level categories, as having to have everything done for them. They saw these students as having to be controlled in behavior and learning. They structured the lessons accordingly.

The result was that they began to teach as though the differences were no longer there. Rather than teach to the brightest students, they simplified the content and assignments for everyone. To stratify assignments is time-consuming; it means dividing the class for discussion or directions occasionally; it means having to grade more than one kind of assignment. And it means adapting a standard grading code set by the school in a way that will fairly reflect the difficulty levels of the assignments. It is easier, so say the teachers, not to have the bright

students write papers. Writing papers calls for many procedural directions and much paper reading by the teacher. It also puts students into contact with resources that make them vulnerable to "self-indoctrination." If some of the students in the same class can barely read, the differential assignments will bring this to attention. When teachers are aware of it, they feel obligated to help that student find suitable reading material or help him or her learn how to read the regular text. If one ignores these differences, or structures the class in a way that hides them, one can remove himself from the obligation of dealing with the inefficiencies these differences pose.

Thus the question of how these defensive teaching strategies deal with student differences is an interesting one which cannot be answered with the expected instructional stratification. One of the purposes of the fragmentation was to reduce content to pieces manageable to students of many ability levels. One of the purposes of systematically omitting current topics was to prevent the instrusion of verbal students' ideas into the pace of the lecture. One of the purposes of mystification was to avoid having to go into a whole series of presentations of a complex topic until everyone understood. The teachers who chafed at de-tracking were in a minority. All but two of the other teachers preferred teaching mixed-ability classes. Teachers in <u>both</u> groups talked student differences outside the classroom, yet taught as though there were no differences. When asked which students' needs were not being met by their department's offerings, most felt that the weakest students were receiving some help from drop-out prevention programs and the like; one or two mentioned that the brightest students were probably bored, but that that "was inevitable." The others felt

that if brighter students were not challenged, they should do something about it themselves. "They can always do more if they want to. Not many go that extra effort any more." In no school was one of the "defensive" teaching strategies limited to students of one ability group. In fact, these strategies were selected by the teachers, according to their explanations of their rationale, in order to deal with "all these different students."

Equally striking is the prevalence of these teaching strategies across differences in teacher ideology. My recent dialogue with Henry Giroux[17] on the ability of teachers to foster emancipatory citizenship education through their resistance to technocratic rationale in schools has centered on the failure of teacher practice to reflect teacher ideology in these schools. The selection of teaching strategies which maximize efficiencies and control of student behavior is observed in teachers who otherwise would appear to have very different political values. Miss L. teaches American history as a chronology of presidents and congresses, and tends to reify the view that citizens must support whoever is in power, because history is made at the top. Her lists consist of presidential plans and congressional enactments. Mr. S. frequently says that "We are all Progressives. . ." and claims ideological links to Jefferson, while making lists of Hamiltonian-like policies. Mr. R. is a labor organizer and teller of stories. He is clearly to the left of most of the other teachers observed; he assigns the reading of public issues pamphlets designed to raise issues out of the normal confines of consensus information, then turns them into seatwork by making students answer the questions at the end of the sections rather than discuss the issues, as the materials intend.[18] He himself loves

political debate and has participated actively in state and national politics. He spoke openly with his students about the contrast between his own leftist leanings and the community's conservatism. Yet his treatment of course topics differed little from that of Miss L. and her presidential lists or Mr. S. and his transparencies.

Miss L. reduced content to fragments but never apologized for assignments. One teacher who innovated consumer economics courses and was well versed on consumer rights and regulatory policies, presented even these issues close to the lives of students in list form and made assignments without expecting significant quality. Mr. I., the most intellectual of the teachers observed, is determined to stretch the minds of students. He says that he deliberately uses difficult words to force students to learn them, and requires students to watch Washington Week in Review and difficult films on such topics as futurology. Yet he permits students to carry on conversations during class, accepts the briefest of outlines as an "independent project," and in general demands little of students. His pleasure comes from his own intense involvement with the subject without the expectation of much student reciprocity; in the classes observed, he got little.

One last example serves to demonstrate the power of simplification strategies to obscure teacher differences and reduce content to its most trivial, least controversial level. Mr. G. describes himself as a Marxist and at other times as a social democrat. He is as politically different from the man with the transparency lectures as could be expected within a range of high school teachers. Mr. G. would like for his students to understand the very inequities and injustices of capitalist economies that the teachers at the first school wish to

hide from their students. He would like for his students to see the validity of Marxian analysis of their economic system and to see that people may have honest disagreements about economic goals and political means. On the surface, the content of his lectures appears somewhat radical. Yet, when seen in the context of its method of presentation, that content mirrors the defensive simplications of the more conservative teachers. While he is much less likely to deliberately mystify a subject, Mr. G. lectures in a very casual, low-key way, making minimal assignments in an apologetic tone, and expecting little student involvement in the topic. He told me that by the time the students become juniors and seniors they are "adults" and should learn on their own. He contradicts this by not requiring them to work on their own, and in fact does not even require them to listen attentively to his lectures. He presents reading material on occasion which contains two opposing perspectives on an issue, but has little means of following up whether students read or understand the differences. His motivations are very different from the teachers reacting against de-tracking and Vietnam war era protests. He was one of the protesters, his reactions within his school are against what he sees as capricious and unsupportive administrators who over-emphasize rules rather than instruction and faculty support. He openly admits that he has lowered his standards of his own efforts in recent years and is unwilling to exert effort on preparations or paper grading or eliciting student compliance with demanding assignments. Points in his lectures which could have earned him censure in the 1950's come across as just another boring set of social studies facts to his students. Their test scores in his class are very low, and a constant hum of side chatter accompanies each lecture. He is liked for his rapport

with students and his willingness to discuss the headlines at the beginning of class. But once the lecture starts, his ideas become "social studies" and are taken less seriously.

Institutional Goals and Personal Knowledge

The conclusion that must not be drawn from these data is that all teachers deny students access to information critical to their functioning in society, or that all teachers use the techniques outlined here under the guise of lecturing just to limit student access to information. We have seen that when teachers do wish to control knowledge access, they often do so consciously. Their chief criteria for selecting strategies of knowledge control seem to be based on maintaining their own authority and efficiencies. Knowledge control as a goal is as much a desire for classroom control as for selective distribution of information. This finding is crucial for our understanding of the ways schools legitimate certain kinds of information and de-legitimate others. The processes and rationale of legitimation, and the legitimation of processes, or ways of knowing, are central to any understanding of the role of the school in transmitting fairly narrow selections from the infinite range of human knowledge.

Although cultural reproduction is generally discussed on a societal level, as the product of a nexus of systemic forces, the mediation of cultural forms in these schools is highly conditioned by the individuals' attempt to deal with institutional constraints. The constraints are not the same in each school. The philosophical values the individual brings to the classroom are not in all cases the same. Yet the strategies for instruction are quite similar: control

students by making school work easy. The result is content that neither the teachers nor the students take very seriously. It is frequently distinct from their personal knowledge.

This has two important implications for our understanding of the nature of secondary schools. First, their roles in reproducing dominant cultural forms is far more complex than any direct correspondence theory would capture. Second, the resulting "official knowledge" is often too impersonal to be appropriated, but its effects are nevertheless damaging.

In every case, these teachers can be said to have resisted the dominant technological forms of knowledge in their conceptualization of social studies curricula. Two of the teachers participated in a strike, one issue of which was the imposition of teaching-by-objectives standards for teacher evaluation. None of the teachers taught to standardized tests nor valued technical knowledge above narrative, intuitive, experiential warrants for knowledge claims. None had adopted a social science model of history, although materials for doing so were available in their school systems and professional associations. With two exceptions, their theories of politics and historiography admitted conflict and rejected simplistic consensus They were not stratifying students for the labor force, nor deliberately reinforcing racial or class inequities. Neither the state nor the business community intruded directly into the treatment and, frequently, the selection of course topics. From their personal values alone, it would seem that these teachers are not "reproducing" technological culture.

Yet their instructional strategies embody the very values they wish to avoid in teaching-by-objective models. In accomodating to institutional priorities for order and efficiency, the teachers

demonstrate the very technocratic values which they disrespect in administrators and on which they blame many of their needs for efficiency in order to survive within the institution. By reducing course content to its most manageable and measurable fragments, the teachers are splitting the learning process into means and ends and reinforcing a concern for extrinsic rewards. The strategies of classroom control have their basis in the reward system of the institution (teacher pay and student credentials, as examples) and the power structure of that institution (the hierarchy which makes teachers responsible for control of students). The societal factors shaping quiescence, discretion and autonomy within the institution are beyond the scope of this discussion, but what the data show is that theories of the social role of schools must be grounded in the processes within schools that mediate selected societal values to the students.

At the elementary level, external forces have more directly shaped curricula by de-skilling teachers through the adoption of "teacher-proof" materials. Packaged materials, produced by commercial publishers, adopted by state and local school systems under the direction of experts like child psychologists and reading specialists, have the purpose of reducing teacher discretion and variation. The "teacher-proof" materials contain pre-tests, instructional techniques, sets of content reduced to measurable items, and post-tests for mastery. All the teacher need do is to follow the directions; no decisions, background, experience, or personal knowledge is necessary.

Secondary teachers at the observed schools have resisted such pre-packaged materials. They see themselves as professionals, and as such as responsible for course content and evaluation. So far, no outside experts or political pressures have attempted to insulate

their students from their discretion through pre-packaged materials. Yet these teachers are participating, and many of them willingly, in their own de-skilling. Their assessment of their effectiveness or even survival within the institution has led them to split their personal knowledge from their classroom teaching in much the same way pre-packaged materials divorce elementary teachers' ideas from instruction and evaluation. The secondary teachers express disrespect for administrators that see only needs for hall order or completed paperwork. They feel frustration when faculty meetings month after month focus on graduation requirements and credit equivalencies rather than substantive matters like library acquisitions and course content. They resent having to do hall duty during their planning periods, as though "planning lessons" were nothing more than a coffee break. They feel alienated from institutional goals which subordinate teaching and learning to institutional maintenance.

Yet, within their classrooms they reinforce these goals of order with the justification that doing so is the only way they can protect themselves from the institutional pressures. They feel no support to deal with ability differences, so they structure lessons that obscure the differences. They get no reward for holding discussions, but feel sanctions for not "covering the material," so they minimize discussion in the interest of speeding up the lecture pace. Each one of the simplification strategies for gaining student compliance could be seen as the participation by high school teachers in their own de-skilling. The gaps between what they are doing and what they could be doing are not gaps imposed by the observer's values, but by the teachers' own comments in interviews as they discuss their personal views of what students ought to learn and what the subject is really all about.

Their caughtness in the institutional reward structure could be seen as an excuse for lazy teaching, or as the most potent of the school's roles in reproducing technological culture. Even those teachers most resistant to that culture resort to instructional strategies aimed at the kind of minimal standards and desire for order which they reject at the administrative level. Their personal ideologies to the contrary, in those teachers observed who articulated them, have not been enough to counter this de-skilling.

Their splitting of their personal knowledge from the institutional in attempts to gain minimal compliance may be seen as a kind of de-skilling of students as well. Yet the data also point to the danger of carrying this conclusion too far and deducing social control effects from social control processes. In a separate discussion,[19] I have elaborated the forms of student resistance which have only been mentioned here. What is clear is that where knowledge control is used as a form of classroom control, alienation increases for all participants, further reinforcing patterns of control. Resistance to forms of control does not mean that students are escaping the effects of the processing of information. For students one real "effect" of the alienation they feel toward school-supplied information is the opportunity cost of rejecting much course content but having no sense of how to find (or generate or evaluate) credible information on one's own. One goal the teachers seem fairly successful at is in placing a distance between the students' own questions and concerns and the course content. This seems to make the students withdraw into their own personal information (their "real" knowledge) so that it will not become as contaminated by school-supplied knowledge.[20]

The supreme example of teachers' promoting a split between one's personal knowledge (their own as well as the students') and classroom knowledge occurred in a class on Contemporary Social Problems. This popular elective takes a social-psychological approach to the selection and discussion of social problems: death and dying, theories of personality, the family, and so on. The teacher uses many lists, despite the discussable nature of the topics, so such a topic as theories of personality might include a few handouts and lists of Freudian concepts, for example.

During the "death and dying" unit the teacher handed out a lengthy questionnaire on attitudes toward death. Such ostensibly impersonal questions as "when did you first become aware of death?" were followed by more personal inquiries about one's views of afterlife, killing for moral reasons, dying for a purpose and so on. One set of questions asked whether a student had ever considered suicide, and if so by what means, and with what degree of actual success. On the way out of class, I asked if the teacher had designed the questionnaire and whether he had ever had any qualms about asking about suicide in such graphic term (such as checking off preferences of methods). He answered that the got the questionnaire "from somewhere." At first he had had second thoughts about the suicide section until he 'checked with a psychologist" who told him it is impossible to put ideas of suicide into another person's head: people come to this act on their own.

Then he said, "Maybe you wondered what I was doing at the door during class. It was about this boy that sits in this seat [he points]. I was checking with the counselor because of his past background." He went on to say that except for this one course the boy was confined to

a mental hospital for attempting suicide about three months before. The teacher had "checked with" the school guidance counselor who in turn had "checked with" the boy's psychologist. It was determined that the boy was indeed a high risk for future suicide attempts but that "it was okay for him to sit in on this." The students would exchange questionnaries, which would bear no names, and count the responses checked for each question. This boy would, if answering honestly, have been the only student to check "attempted suicide, with high probability of success" (or to have answered untruthfully even though many in the class knew of his attempt). That he would thereby be subjected to added strain was of less important than his presence for the "covering of the material." "Learning the content" was not to be confused with relating to is, even at the risk of a boy's life. The discussion placed the topic on the usual level of casual treatment; the field trip for the unit was a trip to a funeral home.

In addition to exacerbating the split between personal and institutional knowledge, the effect of knowledge control which was not successfully resisted by students was the individualization of classroom interaction. The individualization of rewards and sanctions in schools, in terms of credits and failures earned, is fairly commonly understood. What the control strategies in the observed classes accomplished beyond the power of the credentialing system was in privatizing resistance. As students acquiesced to controlled patterns of classroom interaction (or non-interaction), their resistance to the resulting content became silent and hidden (knowable to the reasearcher only through interviews). Because there was no discussion or exchanges of papers (except to mark each other's answers on multiple-choice tests), students tended to feel isolated in their alienation from the content. There was no mechanism

collective response. Occasionally they would grumble together about the tests or about the boredom of the transparencies, or protest with a groan the announcement of a difficult-sounding topic (before the teacher backed off from it). But the teachers had successfully prevented the kind of collective resistance that a few of them recalled being challenged by during the anti-war movement.

The vulnerabilities within the patterns of control, including widespread student cynicism toward oversimplifications, student rejection of facts that contradicted their own information, and teacher alienation at having to apologize for assignments in order to get students to cooperate) remained too hidden to be seen as emancipatory possibilities. So long as they are hidden from participants, the cycle of alienation and control will presumably persist. So long as they are hidden from researchers, these patterns of control will be seen as the inevitable result of schooling in a capitalist society. As we have seen, however, domination is not mechanistically inevitable, but highly adaptive to institutional variability. And with teachers, domination in the classroom may also be interpreted as resistance to their own alienation and lack of control within the larger institution. These many layers of control and resistance must be examined if our theories of cultural reproduction are to be founded in reality, are to help us understand the complex effects of schooling, and are to be instruments of social change.

NOTES

[1]Dwayne Huebner, "Curriculum as the Accessibility of Knowledge," unpublished paper presented at the Curriculum Theory Study Group (Minnepolis, March, 1970).

[2]Linda M. McNeil, "Economic Dimensions of Social Studies Curricula: Curriculum as Institutionalized Knowledge," unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1977. The research, funded in part by a grant from the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin, is the subject of Making Knowledge Inaccessible (in progress).

[3]Linda M. McNeil, "Negotiating Classroom Knowledge: Beyond Achievement and Socialization," in Journal of Curriculum Studies 13, 4 (1981), 313-328.

[4]The administrative context is the subject of a two-year study funded by the Organizational Processes division of the National Institute of Education and entitled "The Institutional Context Controlling Classroom Knowledge." The principal investigator and author of the research report, Contradictions of Control, is L. McNeil. The grant was administered by the Wisconsin Center for Public Policy, Madison, Wisconsin.

[5]For additional insights into students' perceptions of whether teachers take them and their schooling seriously, see Classrooms and Corridors by Mary H. Metz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

[6]This study of the effects of student employment on high school students and their school work is entitled "Lowering Expectations: Student Employment and its Impact on Curriculum," funded by the University of Wisconsin School of Education Research and Development Center forthe study of Student Diversity; L. McNeil is principal investigator.

[7]Karen B. Wiley, The Status of Pre-College Science, Mathematics and Social Science Education: 1955-1975. Volume III: Social Science Education. (Boulder, Colorado: Social Science Education Consortium, Inc., 1977). Funded by the National Science Foundation.

[8]Francis Fitzgerald, America Revised. (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, Little Brown, 1979) and Jean Anyon, "Ideology and United States History Textbooks," in Harvard Educational Review 49,3 (August, 1979), 361-386.

[9]See Frances Fitzgerald, "History Textbooks (Parts I-III)," The New Yorker (February 26, 1979; March 5 and 12, 1979).

[10]Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America. (New York: Basic Books, 1976). (See L. McNeil, notes 2 and 3 above for my assertion that their data do not entirely support their conclusion.)

[11]Pierre Bourdieu, with Jean-Claude Passeron, Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publication, 1977). See also P. Bourdieu, "Systems of Education and Systems of Thought," in M. Young, editor, Knowledge and Control (London: Macmillan, 1971).

[12]See Madeleine(MacDonald) Arnot's discussion of Bourdieu's contribution to the understanding of tacit, dispositional aspects of cultural reproduction in The Curriculum and Cultural Reproduction (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 1977), 35 ff.

[13]Conversation with Geoffrey Whitty, Madison, Wisconsin, December, 1979.

[14]See L. McNeil, notes 2 and 3, above.

[15]Data on the students' perceptions of the trade-offs they make between jobs and school work is forthcoming (see note 6, above).

[16]See note 4, above.

[17]L. McNeil, "On the Possibility of Teachers as the Source of an Emancipatory Pedagogy: A Response to Henry Giroux," Curriculum Inquiry 11:3 (1981), and "Response to Henry Giroux's 'Pedagogy, Pessimism, and the Politics of Conformity,'" Curriculum Inquiry 11:4 (1981).

[18]See the Public Issues pamphlets series written by Donald Oliver and Fred M. Newmann, and published by Xerox.

[19]See note 3, above.

[20]See Jurgens Habermas, Legitimation Crisis (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971) for analysis of the implications of replacing the moral and ethical language of personal knowledge with technical language in our large institutions. For application of this idea to students' role as clients, see L. McNeil, Making Knowledge Inaccessible, Chapter 7.